

Amendments to the Claims

Kindly amend claims 1, 4-8, 15 & 16, as set forth below. All pending claims are reproduced below, with changes in the amended claims shown by underlining (for added matter) and strikethrough/double brackets (for deleted matter).

1. (Currently Amended) A method of effecting improvement of an organization comprising:

ascertaining through research with customers of the organization desired characteristics for the organization from a customer perspective;

employing ~~at least one leader~~ leadership of the organization to define cultural characteristics for the organization using, at least in part, the desired characteristics ascertained through research with the customers of the organization;

defining by the leadership of the organization the cultural characteristics in behavioral terms;

subsequently identifying defined cultural characteristics which are not already present in the organization or present characteristics of the organization which are inconsistent with the defined cultural characteristics;

generating at least one action plan for changing the organization to implement the defined cultural characteristics within the organization and diminish any identified present characteristics inconsistent with the defined cultural characteristics;

employing ~~at least one leader~~ leadership of the organization to validate the cultural characteristics expressed in behavioral terms and the at least one action plan with at least one focus group comprising, at least in part, managers within the organization; and

once validated, implementing the at least one action plan across at least a portion of the organization.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising assigning individuals within the organization to implement the at least one action plan among at least some members of the organization, and wherein the effecting improvement of the organization comprises enhancing productivity of members of the organization.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the enhancing productivity of members comprises enhancing at least one of sales productivity or service productivity of members of the organization.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the employing ~~at least one leader~~ leadership to define the cultural characteristics in behavioral terms comprises employing ~~at least one leader~~ leadership to define the cultural characteristics as desired sales behavioral characteristics.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~at least one leader~~ leadership comprises at least one senior sales ~~leaders~~ leader of the organization, and the managers comprise first line managers of sales members of the organization.

6. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

obtaining cultural characteristics for an organization expressed in behavioral terms, the cultural characteristics for the organization being obtained employing desired characteristics for the organization from a customer perspective ascertained through research with customers of the organization;

training a recruiter for the organization on the cultural characteristics of the organization;

during an interview with an applicant, having the recruiter describe the cultural characteristics of the organization;

asking the applicant to relate past education or employment behavior to the cultural characteristics of the organization; and

hiring the applicant if, in part, there is a sufficient degree of match between the applicant's described past education or employment behavior and the cultural characteristics of the organization.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 6, wherein said obtaining cultural characteristics for the organization comprises ~~ascertaining through research with customers of the organization desired characteristics for the organization from a customer perspective, and~~ employing at least one leader leadership of the organization to define cultural characteristics for the organization using, at least in part, the desired characteristics ascertained through research with customers of the organization.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7, wherein said obtaining cultural characteristics further comprises employing at least one leader leadership of the organization to validate the cultural characteristics expressed in behavioral terms with at least one organization focus group comprising, at least in part, managers within the organization.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising assessing a degree of match between the applicant's described education or employment behavior and the cultural characteristics of the organization, and wherein said hiring comprises hiring the applicant if, in part, the degree of match is acceptable.

10. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the organization is at least one of a sales providing organization or a service providing organization.

11. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising determining hiring targets for the organization, and wherein said hiring further comprises hiring enough applicants having an acceptable degree of match using said method to meet the hiring targets.

12. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising, after hiring the applicant, further training the applicant about the cultural characteristics of the organization.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said training comprises at least one of taking a corporate level class, reviewing a master checklist, or taking a solutions operations class.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the solutions operations class includes training in customer support services, distributed services, e-business delivery services and enterprise services.

15. (Currently Amended) A method of effecting improvement of an organization comprising:

defining cultural characteristics for an organization employing desired characteristics for the organization from a customer perspective ascertained through research with customers of the organization;

developing shared executive norms for leaders of the organization comprising behavioral expressions for the leaders of the defined cultural characteristics;

implementing the shared executive norms among at least some leaders of the organization for a period time;

subsequent to said implementing, generating at least one action plan for changing the organization to implement the defined cultural characteristics within the organization and diminish any present characteristics inconsistent with the defined cultural characteristics;

employing at least one leader of the at least some leaders implementing the shared executive norms to validate the at least one action plan with a focus group comprising managers or members of the organization; and

once validated, implementing the at least one action plan across at least a portion of the organization.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said defining comprises ~~ascertaining through research with customers of an organization desired characteristics for the organization from a customer perspective, and employing, at least one leader~~ employing leadership of the organization to define the cultural characteristics of the organization using, at least in part, the desired characteristics ascertained through research with the customers of the organization.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising, prior to said implementing, developing at least one action plan for implementing the shared executive norms among at least some leaders of the organization, and wherein said implementing comprises employing said at least one action plan in implementing the shared executive norms among the at least some leaders of the organization for the period of time.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising, prior to said implementing, validating the action plan for implementing the shared executive norms, said validating being performed using a focus group comprising leaders of the organization.

19. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said implementing comprises implementing the shared executive norms among at the least some leaders of the organization for at least several months prior to proceeding with generating of an action plan for changing the organization to implement the defined cultural characteristics across the organization.

20. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising prior to generating the at least one action plan, identifying defined cultural characteristics which are not already present in the organization or present characteristics of the organization which are inconsistent with the defined cultural characteristics.

21. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising measuring progress in implementing the at least one action plan across the at least one portion of the organization.

22. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the effecting improvement of the organization comprises enhancing productivity of members of the organization, and wherein the enhancing productivity of members comprises enhancing at least one of sales productivity or service productivity of members of the organization.

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